

MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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No. 1



From an Old Photograph Taken at Elkhart, Indiana

The picture above is reproduced from an old photograph in the Phoebe M. Kolb collection in the Archives of the Mennonite Church. It was taken in 1903 for the *Chicago Chronicle* to illustrate Mennonite garb. The young women in this illustration, as well as the young men pictured in the October, 1952, MHB modeled these costumes, which they did not necessarily wear, to show types of plain clothing then being worn by some Mennonites in Indiana. Left to right: Mrs. Lavona Berkey Ebersole, Barbara Blosser Steiner, Minnie Stauffer, Adeline Brunk, Anna Holdeman Miller, Elsie Kolb Bender.

Christian Life Conferences

John Umble

Christian Life Conference is a name for an inspirational conference held in recent years in (old) Mennonite congregations. Hesston College students and instructors attended a "Christian Life Conference" at the Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church near Harper, Kansas, during the Easter vacation in 1926. A similar conference was held at the Home Mission in Chicago in March 1926. Such a conference was held also at the Mennonite Church near Metamora, Illinois, during the Christmas vacation in 1928.

The Christian Life Conference had its inception in a Young Men's Conference held at the Pennsylvania Church near Hesston, Kansas, on Dec. 31, 1917, and Jan. 1, 1918. The conference was called to enable the young men to discuss prob-

lems relating to the Mennonite testimony during the war. The success of this meeting led to its continuance the next year as a Young People's Conference with both young men and young women participating. This conference was held annually until 1926 when its name was changed to Christian Life Conference.

Noah Oyer, dean of Goshen College, who was a member of and deeply interested in the General Sunday School Committee, the Young People's Problems Committee, and the Young People's Bible Meeting Topics Committee, is credited with arranging for the first Christian Life Conference held at Goshen College in 1927 at the conclusion of the annual Winter Bible Term. It had been advertised as a "conference for old and young, but especially for the young people of the Mennonite Church."

Interest in this annual conference at Goshen College was very good from the beginning. On several occasions many were unable to find room in Assembly

Hall and the adjoining classrooms. It continues to be one of the most inspiring and helpful meetings of the college year. Hesston College seems to have held no Christian Life Conference as such in 1927, but in connection with Young People's Week during the Special Bible Term Daniel Kauffman gave talks on the Christian life and also "Life Work Talks." Hesston College held a Christian Life Conference in 1928 and Eastern Mennonite School in 1929. At the latter institution the two-day conference concluded a ministers' week. Such meetings are still quite general throughout the Mennonite Church east and west. They are held in connection with the Winter Bible Schools and by individual congregations. The Canton Bible School held one in 1947, the Spring Mount Mission in the same year, and the Blainsport Church at Reinholds, Pennsylvania, in 1948.

Goshen, Indiana.

(From *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*)

The Early Life of John F. Funk

Willard D. Ruth

Bishop Heinrick Funk, the great-great-grandfather of John F. Funk, came to America in 1717. He was an able writer. One of his books which was widely used in the Mennomite Church was the book *Eine Restitution*.

John F. Funk's father was Jacob Funk, born on December 16, 1796, in Springfield Township, Bucks County, later moving to New Britain Township and locating on what is now known as the Hayden Block Factory, which was at one time the home of Bishop Henry Rosenberger of the Blooming Glen Church. This farm was originally part of a 1,000-acre tract dating back to the time of the Penns.

Jacob Funk was a mason, bricklayer, farmer, and market man. John would arise at two o'clock in the morning to accompany his father to Philadelphia with a market wagon load of eggs, poultry, butter, and produce. He would spend several days in Philadelphia and return to his home at ten o'clock at night, learning early what a long day meant. Jacob Funk was color blind and one will find that many of his descendants were also color blind. He lived to be eighty-one years old. He was married twice. His first wife was Margaret Haldeman. They were blessed with two children, Mary Ann and Catherine.

One beautiful autumn day tragedy befell this happy family as the mother was going to a neighbor's to attend a quilting party. In crossing a corner of the farm she was attacked by a half wild old sow, which had a litter of small pigs. The hog knocked her to the ground and tore out her intestines. Catherine as an old lady would tell how she saw her mother die in her father's arms.

Jacob Funk then married Susan Fretz, the daughter of Martin Fretz. She was born in 1802 and died in 1890 at the age of eighty-eight. To this union were born seven children, Margaret, Esther, John (our subject), Sarah, Abram (who also plays an important part), Jacob, and Susan.

In the meantime Jacob Funk had moved to the farm adjoining directly to the north. This was in the year 1835, the year that John F. Funk was born.

John was born April 6, 1835. To locate this farm geographically, starting from the village of Chalfont going north on route 152, passing through Newville, a small hamlet of eight or ten homes, and still going north on route 152, there are two unimproved roads leading off to the right. Taking the second dirt road, which winds along a lovely dale and a clear flowing brook, and following this winding road for a mile, you will come to the place where John F. Funk first saw the light of day. Here is a large rambling stone house with huge chimneys, and it could be seen that the barn had burned

down years ago. Seventy-five acres of land sloped to the south. I stood and mused to think that here was born a pioneer Mennomite leader so far off the beaten track. Can this be the place?

A man made his appearance and in high German asked what I wanted. In my broken German I tried to explain my mission. So we finally located his wife who could speak English.

To think that over this doorsill John F. Funk had trod many a summer day! I think that if John F. Funk could have come back he would have hung up his hat and felt at home. Entering a very large room with bare oak floors, and open joists in the ceiling, I saw a beautiful large open fireplace. The next room had even a larger open fireplace, and a beautiful winding stairway greeted my eyes.

I asked the lady if I might examine the deeds to this farm. Going to a large old-fashioned chest, she brought out the largest amount of deeds I have ever seen together and spread them out on the table. Some of these deeds were written on sheepskin. The first deeds were in pounds, shillings, and pence.

In 1779 the place was sold for \$835, and in the year 1835 Jacob Funk bought it from Michall Miller for \$2,000. So there is no doubt but this is John F. Funk's birthplace. As stated before, this place is off the beaten path but I was told that down along this dale with its babbling brook there had been a flourishing mill and creamery. In searching along the brook I finally came across the ruins of the creamery, and I could still trace the outline of the dam across the brook.

The road into this place had long since disappeared and grown up with trees. Old-timers say there was a day when the teams were lined up waiting for their turn to unload their milk and take feed along home.

John F. Funk undoubtedly took his place in this line. But today this onetime busy place has vanished, and in a few years will be forgotten. This was known as the Woodlawn Creamery Road.

So the place of his birth having been established, let us look into his education. When we study his books and writings we can see a master mind back of them. At this period of time, in the village of Line Lexington, at the south of the village there was located the Price Academy. The school has disappeared and only a depression in the ground marks the spot where the school stood. As John F. Funk's parents attended the Line Lexington Mennomite Church and the children of this period of time attended this academy, it is possible that John F. Funk received his early education here. Whichever he acquired his grade schooling, he also attended Freeland Seminary, now known as Ursinus College. He would go to school in the summer and teach in the winter. He taught at what was then known as the Chestnut Ridge School.

His teaching career started at the age of nineteen in the year 1854. To show his ability at learning, at the age of nine

he had memorized 1,600 Scripture verses. In that period of time school lasted four months. One of his pupils was Bishop Henry Rosenberger. While teaching here at Chestnut Ridge, to show his literary mind, he started to publish a journal of school life, neighborhood happenings, church events, etc., sending them along home with his pupils, which were well received by their parents, as reading matter was scarce in those days. He taught here at Chestnut Ridge for three years.

In the year 1858 he graduated from Bell and Stratton Commercial College in Chicago with honors. He was a student his entire life and a lover of good books of which he acquired a large library.

Mary Ann played a prominent place in the lives of the Funk boys, her brothers. She married a Jacob Beidler of Bedminster Township, Bucks County. This man was born in 1815 and died in 1893, at the age of eighty-three.

In 1844 he with Mary Ann decided to go west. They located in Chicago, then a frontier town. He was a shrewd businessman and saw the possibility of a growing town. He, therefore, went to the north of Chicago and bought large tracts of forest. These forests were the best that could be bought. In these forests he set up his sawmills. Here he cut his lumber and sent it to Chicago, where he had large lumberyards. The student of history will remember the Chicago fire, which was supposed to have been started by a cow kicking over a lantern. While Beidler's lumberyards were not touched, they were on the very edge of the fire. So we see that in order to rebuild, lumber and more lumber was needed and Beidler was in a position to supply it.

In the language of today we would say, "He cornered the market and cleaned up." He became very wealthy. I was told by an elderly man that he remembered when the Beidlers came east to visit. He described Beidler as a very large man with a beard trimmed to a point, nose pinchers on a black cord, driving the best livery team and refusing to eat with the hired help.

But Beidler was a good giver and at one time gave \$80,000 to one cause. One morning he was reading a paper when his secretary came in and informed him that one of his lumber camps had burned, amounting to a loss of \$16,000. He went on reading, not in the least bit excited. No wonder he lived to be eighty-three. He gave toward the Publishing House.

This man Beidler influenced John F. Funk to come to Chicago. So on April 11, 1857, John F. with \$60 in his pocket and two suits, left for Chicago. His mother's heart was heavy, and he made the statement that her prayers followed him. He went to his half sister in Chicago. His motive in going west was strictly business. If Jacob Beidler is making money in the lumber business, why not he? So John F. went into the lumber business.

At this point let us turn to his younger brother, Joseph. Born in 1840, he also

attended Freeland Seminary and Excelsior Normal School at Carversville. Monday morning they would walk the twelve miles to school, board there during the week, and Friday evening would walk the twelve miles home. At the age of eighteen Joseph was teaching school. Joseph taught in the winter and farmed in the summer. These men were born leaders. News came back from Chicago that John was making money in the lumber business. Joseph was influenced to go to Chicago and also engaged in the lumber business in the year 1863.

A younger brother, Jacob, followed his two older brothers west to Chicago and for a few years engaged in the lumber business, then decided to go still farther west. There is very little known of Jacob. One of his daughters was very well educated as a teacher of German and lived in Germany for a number of years, studying the German language.

When John F. Funk arrived in Chicago, the following Sunday a neighbor boy, by the name of Lord, invited John F. along to a mission Sunday school. Lord was a teacher in this school and John F. accompanied him to Sunday school. In Pennsylvania there were no Sunday schools at this time and they were looked upon as dangerous. Another teacher in this mission Sunday school was D. L. Moody, whom Funk soon learned to know and like. The influence of D. L. Moody on Funk soon showed its results. He became a pupil in one school, a teacher in the second, and a superintendent in the third. At this time he was not yet baptized. While he was working with Moody in Sunday-school work and tract distribution he considered it the high spot of his life.

On one of these missions, they wandered into a church where a young people's meeting was being held. This is where the Mennonite Church received the idea for young people's meetings. Here in these Sunday schools Funk learned public speaking. He promised God if He would spare his life that he would visit his old home and congregation at Line Lexington, Bucks County, and there be baptized.

He taught a Sunday-school class for two years before he was baptized. In 1859 at the age of twenty-four he visited his parents. In the church where he as a boy had listened to sermons in German, which he could also speak fluently, he was baptized and received into the Mennonite Church at this time, although he had been converted in the Presbyterian Church. This shows his parental training and its influence on his life.

In the year 1861 he was elected superintendent of the Milwaukee Depot Mission Sunday School. This was a work he promoted and enjoyed. In 1863 he had two visitors, Peter Nissley from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and John Brenneman from Ohio. This we would not think so strange, but John F. Funk did some sweating over what to do on Sunday morning. Would these men go to Sunday

school? A lot of people were bitterly opposed to Sunday schools in those days. John was a diplomat and persuaded them to go along to Sunday school. Afterwards he remarked that they seemed to enjoy it very much.

Brenneman went along home with John F. Funk overnight, where Funk showed him a book that he was writing at this time on war, its evils and our duty. This was at the time of the Civil War. Brenneman encouraged him to publish it, which he did, and it was well received in the Mennonite Church. This was his first publication and was published in 1863.

He was very much concerned that our church had so little literature and especially no church paper. In 1866 Henry Bertolet, of Skipack, a Mennonite preacher, started a church paper. He came out with one issue and was stopped by opposition. Funk thought over this matter and had a burning zeal for this work. He started preparation for a church paper. He had no encouragement, no help, no outside funds, and no mailing list but he had plenty of opposition. In January, 1864, the first edition of our church paper was off the press and ready to be mailed. It had four pages 10 x 15 inches and cost one dollar per year. It was entitled *Herald of Truth*. The paper was born in a raging snowstorm, 30 degrees below zero, and the trains did not run for three days. It seemed that even the forces of nature were against him. But Funk's heart was warm and he promised God if he would have a thousand subscriptions the first year, he would continue, and he had twelve hundred.

In January, 1867, he had enlarged it to sixteen pages 9 x 12 and by this time he had fifteen hundred English and one thousand German subscriptions. This was in Chicago, and at this time he was not yet married. He was almost too busy to think of getting married. All the Funk boys came back to Bucks County for wives. On January 19, 1864, John came back to Bucks County and was married to Salome Kratz of Hilltown by Isaac Meyers of Deep Run. They lived together for fifty-four years and six children blessed their family.

Let us remember that he was engaged in the lumber business ten hours a day for six days of the week and published the church paper at night. He would work, write, and then print by a hand lever press. He would get so tired that he would lie down on the floor and sleep for an hour or two, then get up and go to work. He would work as long as twenty hours a day. His early training helped him stand these long hours.

He also established a tablet factory as a side line to supply paper for his printery.

Chalfont, Pennsylvania.



A Collection and Presentation of Genealogical Data

George S. Hunsberger

In order to be informed as accurately as possible about our family backgrounds it is necessary to have written, documented, and accurate records of our ancestors. With this thought in mind many persons have set down for posterity the records of their families.

How does one start to collect data for a genealogy? Donald Parker lists several sources of information and several beginning points. Listed here are many sources to be used as a beginning, including those suggested by Parker.

1. Telephone directories.
2. Family traditions, oral and written recollections.
3. Family Bibles.
4. Gravestones.
5. Family relationships.
6. Wills.
7. Deeds.
8. Mortgages.
9. Birth records.
10. Newspaper articles: social, stories, death and birth notices.
11. Death records, and burial records.
12. Historical societies.
13. Local history.
14. War registers.
15. U.S. census records, 1790-1880.

The historian will find vast quantities of material from these sources and before he has collected too much data he will realize that a very flexible and understandable filing system is needed. For this reason he must select working aids that are not too cumbersome, not too hard to understand. Yet no matter how clear and neat a form may be, there are some who will not understand it. The writer's father was visiting a family in Switzerland in 1938, and the conversation was on a formal level until the householder realized that the visitor was the same person who had mailed a form to be filled and returned to the United States 'way back in 1925. He then went into his house, brought out the form, and said, "Now you can help me fill in this form." The record a historian needs to keep always on hand is the permanent record. In recording the permanent information, a pattern must be developed that will be maintained when the work is sent to the printer.

Some historians, in recording a family history, have deemed it necessary and essential to include paragraphs or pages about the spouses of the family tree personnel. Such deflections from the dominant theme tend to slow down the story, and also to swamp the reader with facts and stories not of fundamental information about the family members. The easiest method to use to note the consort stories is by footnotes. Further, if a consort's history is recorded in a separate geneal-

ogy, there is no need to transcribe all the information there into the new tome, for a footnote referring to that genealogy will suffice, and the interested reader will get the other book and read the information he wishes to read. By footnotes and references to other works the reader is enabled to keep his mind on the true purpose of the present volume; to present the family data of the _____ family, and this presentation is then in readable style, without deflections and vagaries.

The collecting of data is the most tedious part of the whole process, and also the most time consuming. One day the writer's father asked that a trip be made to a certain graveyard where we would find a gravestone of a particular person. From this stone we were to copy the birth and death dates. The writer and a cousin made this trip, and after plodding up and down the rows of stones several times we admitted we missed seeing the stone. We went to the caretaker's home, and he had a chart of all the stones and the inscriptions thereon. A cursory glance at this list did not disclose the name. However, when we took the list home and used a ruler to guide our eyes down the pages we found the name we were looking for and were able to copy the necessary information. The search took more than eight hours, mainly because our eyes played tricks on us.

One way to collect data is to prepare an information blank. This may be called an inquiry blank, or a personal record. The information supplied on these personal record forms can then be transcribed onto the permanent record forms. Every time a new form is received it is necessary to arrange it in the order of the number assigned to that name. These forms are sent out to known relatives and the numbers inserted by the historian before they leave his office. Hence the job of sorting them numerically is easy.

In collecting the personal record information on the Hunsberger family, many times questions were unanswered or hazy answers were given. In those cases follow-up sheets were sent to the persons, and they were asked to clear up the item indicated on the sheet.

One of the hardest problems to solve is the birth order of the families born one hundred or more years ago. It was, and still is, in some families, the custom to record all the boys first, and then all the girls. This put the people chronologically out of order in most cases, because most families are not born this way. My great-grandfather's family had been recorded in this manner, and the proper order was gotten, not by correspondence, but by a visit to the cousins in Indiana. There one of the cousins told the historian that he did not have them in the right order. He then asked for the correct order and was not too surprised to be told that one of the daughters was born first.

Due to reticence on the part of these Mennonite folks to write things down, there is a strong possibility that many families are not chronologically accurate,

not only in the Hunsberger record, but also in the Mast, Moyer, Fretz, and Kratz records as well.

After as much information has been collected about the families as possible, the historian may find a family member who has made an outstanding achievement or done something special that would be of interest to the other members of the family. In this case the historian will send to this family member a blank asking for a short biography of the person named thereon.

At long last, oftentimes several decades after the record was started, the historian has filled practically all the gaps in the genealogy and is now ready to present to the world the record of his research, findings, and family ties.

The biggest problem confronting the historian is how to show relationships. Brothers and sisters generally are easy, but how do you best show different generations? One way is to give each generation a number, viz., First Generation, Second Generation, ad infinitum, as is done in the *Mast Family History*. Another way is to indicate different generations by Roman numerals, viz., I, II, III, ad infinitum, as is done in the Moyer, Fretz, and Kratz records. Then another way is to give each person a different number, viz., 323, 631; 323, 631, 3; 323, 631, 31, ad infinitum, as is done in the Hunsberger record. Further, some genealogies have no generation indicated at all. Such is the record compiled by the Historical Research Bureau, Washington, D.C., of the Hunsberger family.

To present the material to the family members and to the public is the individual responsibility of the historian. He must choose the form in which to present the material. Once this form is chosen, it must be consistent throughout. Gilbert Harry Doane, in his book *Searching for Your Ancestors* (McGraw Hill Book Co., Inc., 1937), gives us a very elaborate method on page 177 of how to arrange a genealogy. He wants every statement documented, and a list of general references used in building up the history of this generation of the family.

As this writer sees it, this form of genealogy presentation would definitely take away from the trend of the story, for most records are made by the family members; and on the personal record blanks, this information should be recorded, but there is no necessity to put all the documentary comments in the history. Give a general description in the introduction as to how most of the history was collected, and then if there is special documentation for statements in the history proper, such can be done by footnotes.

Donald D. Parker, in his book *Local History*, on page 12, states: Family histories are of all sorts and of all degrees of accuracy. Doane warns against the genealogies, some of them very pretentious, which have been gotten up often at great expense to satisfy family pride but without much regard for accuracy. Such books are never to be judged by their

bindings or their size. (Doane: *Searching for Your Ancestors*, 64.)

In summing up the presentation of genealogical data, we state that the historian must present his data in a clear, orderly, and interesting manner, with enough family anecdotes, stories, and doings well intermingled with the family listings, so that the dry listings will not become boring to the reader. Every historian would do well to keep in mind this question: "What would an intelligent outsider want to know about this community or about this subject?" (D. D. Parker, *Local History*, p. X.)

Amish in North Dakota

Floyd E. Kauffman

The spirit of adventure captured more than a few Amish farmers during the frontier days. Many were minded to leave their friends and their well-established communities in the eastern states to take up the hard task of pioneering on the Great Plains. A periodic surge of interest in colonization was sometimes caused by unrest and "church trouble" in the home community. With a keen eye for fertile land, a love for a peaceful and unmolested habitation, and with fearless attempts at hard work, this restless spirit led the Amishman to some of the remote parts of the country. Of the sixteen states which now contain established Old Order Amish communities, North Dakota was one of the last to be the recipient of the Amish.

A wave of interest in colonization to North Dakota began to manifest itself among the Amish in Indiana in 1893, and in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, about 1896. A delegation of Amishmen from Elkhart County, Indiana, consisting of Peuben E. Bontreger, Eli J. Bontreger, R. A. Yoder, J. A. Miller and D. D. Kauffman visited North Dakota in 1893. They were favorably impressed with the vast area of level country and the exceptional opportunities offered to home seekers; and they decided to recommend the Turtle mountain district in Rolette County for prospective settlers. In the spring of 1894 four families from Indiana moved to North Dakota, namely, R. A. Yoder, John D. Bontreger, Joni Herschberger, M. H. Hochsteller, and a single man, John A. Yoder. These families settled near Rolla in Rolette County, but they later moved to the Island Lake region near McVlo and Wolford.

In 1895 a mass movement of immigrants to North Dakota began, including many members of the Church of the Brethren as well as Amish, from several counties in Indiana and from Ohio and Kansas. Eli J. Bontreger, who was ordained a minister in 1894, and R. L. Bontreger left Indiana, and with their families, moved to North Dakota in 1895.

Several families in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, became interested in the Dakotas about 1900. Jonas Renno, who owned and operated the Renno Mill near

Belleville, moved there in 1898, and with a great deal of enthusiasm succeeded in getting a small following. Aaron Yoder, who married Renno's daughter, established his home there in 1901. A few bachelors from Mifflin County also went with the movement. While holding evangelistic meetings in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, in January, 1903, D. D. Miller learned of a considerable group of Mennonites and Amishmen who were contemplating moving to North Dakota. At the suggestion of Brother Miller, the two valley congregations, Belleville and Alvensville, met jointly on March 1, 1903, and ordained I. S. Mast to serve as minister for the new congregation about to move to Dakota. This group boarded the train at Reedsville, Pennsylvania, on March 30, 1903, and arrived at Surrey, North Dakota, on April 2.

Among the families from Nebraska who moved to North Dakota were David Yoder and his single brother Michael Yoder, Solomon Yoder, and Isaac Kauffman.

For more than eight years after the first group of Amish established themselves in North Dakota, many families moved to Rolette and Pierce counties from several states. Most of them filed claims on government land. The Amish settlement in North Dakota probably reached its apex in 1903 when there were about fifty families in the settlement, and the church was divided into two districts.

Now, after fifty years, Amish life in North Dakota is almost extinct. Already in 1903 the trek to other states began. In 1909 there was a large exodus when many families moved to Colorado to settle on government land. Others moved to Indiana, Kansas, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Montana. The reasons for the disintegration of the Amish community which seemed to have been so promising are varied. The long severe winters, with much sub-zero weather and deep snow, discouraged many families. The limited medical and community service caused some anxiety, and many wives, unable to adjust themselves to the new environment, persuaded their husbands to return to their former homes. It is suggested that many came to North Dakota, made their fortune, and then moved away.

The Old Order Amish community has lost its distinctiveness as such because many of the members joined the Lakeview Mennonite congregation, organized in 1916. A large share of the 102 members now comprising the Lakeview congregation are of Amish descent.

Eli J. Bontreger served as bishop of the church from 1895 to 1910, when he moved to Wisconsin. Abe Graber was ordained bishop in 19— to succeed Eli Bontreger, and in 19— Abe Gingerich was ordained bishop to succeed Graber. Eli J. Bontreger at the request of the North Dakota Amish continued to assist the congregation, visiting the church every two years until 1936 when Mahlon L. Yoder was ordained bishop. Church life was not satisfactory for many years. The constant drain of families moving out as

well as a few moving in did not help to strengthen the community. The Amish Church in North Dakota now has only eight members, and Mahlon L. Yoder is the present minister and bishop. See "County Status Aided by Amish Mennonites," in *Turtle Mountain Star* (June 22, 1938), Rolla, N. Dak., p. 58.

The Robson-Funk Correspondence

John F. Funk as editor of the *Herald of Truth* was very active in arousing the interest of American Mennonites in behalf of Mennonites in Russia, who in the 1870's were seeking a new home in America in order to escape military service in their homeland. He not only carried on a correspondence with the Russian Mennonite leaders but also kept in touch with individuals and organizations interested in giving economic aid to needy Mennonite immigrants. As treasurer of the Mennonite Board of Guardians, organized to assist Mennonite immigrants, he handled thousands of dollars loaned or donated to the cause of the Board. For a complete account of his activities, see Kempes Schnell, "John F. Funk, 1835-1930, and the Mennonite Migration of 1873-1875," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, July, 1950.

But Funk's correspondence was not limited to Mennonites. English Friends, too, were interested in the plight of the Mennonites in Russia and came to their aid as is proved by the two letters below, from the Funk correspondence in the Archives of the Mennonite Church. For a more complete discussion of the relationships of the Friends and Mennonites, see Owen Gingerich, "Relations Between the Russian Mennonites and the Friends During the Nineteenth Century," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, October, 1951.

—M. G.

Dalton
W. Huddersfield
14. 1. 75

Dear Friend John F. Funk

A good deal of sympathy and fellow feeling has been felt, as might be expected, by members of the Society of Friends on behalf of the Mennonite Emigrants from South Russia, driven away from their homes on account of their faithfulness in their testimony against War.

In the last no. of the *Herald of Truth* it was stated that several of them, especially in Dakota, have been suffering much privation and are likely to need assistance during the winter and I have been requested to forward the enclosed £60 as a donation for this special object—viz. £50 from Thos. Harvey and 10£ from Hester Rich.

Not being certain that our dear friend Cornelius Janzen is at home at present and thinking that *prompt* assistance is required, I thought I might venture to ask *thee* kindly to take charge of it, not doubting that thou wilt take care that it is properly applied.

I do not forget thy kindness to me when at Elkhart and have often thought with interest of the meeting we attended in the country.

I believe I am also indebted to thee for sending me the "Herald of Truth" in the perusal of which I have been much interested. Mennonites and Friends have so much in common that there is much of a feeling of brotherhood which it is very desirable to encourage.

I shall be obliged by acknowledgment of the enclosed £60 and remain
with kind regard thy friend
Isaac Robson

(From the John F. Funk collection,
Archives of the Mennonite Church)

Dalton
Huddersfield
25. III. 75

Dear Friend, John Funk

I have now the pleasure of forwarding Bill at 21 days for £140, making altogether £200 sent to thy care for the assistance of the needy Mennonite Emigrants.

The object of this subscription, I think thou wilt understand, is not to assist emigration, which seems already provided for by Mennonites in America, but for the relief of those already in America, who are reduced to want, either by providing seed or the supply of present bodily wants.

I do not know whether there has been any correspondence between our friend Cornelius Janzen and thyself as to the appropriation of this money, but as a considerable amount has been sent to him, perhaps it might be well that you shall have an understanding between you, so that you may not interfere with each other's field of distribution.

It has been a great pleasure to me to have met in our own community so ready and hearty a sympathy with those who are suffering for their testimony against war so nobly.

With very kind regards, I remain thy
assured friend,

Isaac Robson

(From the John F. Funk collection,
Archives of the Mennonite Church)

NEWS AND NOTES

Glenn D. Everett, 1253 National Press Building, Washington, D.C., is writing a book on the Amish, to be entitled "God's Plain People." Photographer Lloyd Jones is producing the illustrations for the book. Everett writes, "Our refusal to try to sneak any pictures and our insistence on explaining to the Amish bishops exactly what we are doing and why we are there is winning a surprising amount of cooperation from them." Following the Chicago political conventions, which he covered, Everett spent a number of days in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library doing research for his book and now plans to come back to Goshen for additional study.

Sheldon Madeira, a teacher in the Philadelphia public schools, spent a number of days during the past summer working in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library on his doctoral dissertation entitled "A Study of Amish Education in Pennsylvania."

Robert Kreider's dissertation on the relations of the Anabaptists to the civil authorities in Switzerland and south Germany has been completed for his degree at Chicago University. During the school year, Kreider spent a number of periods of study in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library.

Dr. Gunnar Westin, Head of the Department of Church History, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden, spent several days in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library during the past summer doing research on Anabaptism and spiritualism in Reformation times. Dr. Westin was pleased to find sources here which he had been unable to locate in the libraries of Europe.

Dr. E. K. Francis of Notre Dame University is continuing his research on the Mennonites of Manitoba. During the past year he has done work on his forthcoming book at the Bethel College Historical Library and at Goshen College.

James Renssler and Daniel J. Graber, students at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Chicago, did research in the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library. Frederick Wright used the Goshen library for his master's thesis at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary on the subject "The Views of Baptism of the Biblical Anabaptists of Switzerland and the Netherlands."

Ira E. Miller of Eastern Mennonite College is working on his doctoral dissertation at Temple University on the theme "The Development of the Present Status of Mennonite Secondary and Higher Education in the United States and Canada."

Leroy Kennel during the past school year wrote as his master's thesis at the University of Iowa "A Rhetorical Criticism of Three Sermons by John S. Coffman: Nineteenth Century Mennonite Educator and Evangelist."

David Wedel, President of Bethel College, received his doctor of theology degree from the Iliff School of Theology on August 21, 1952. His dissertation subject was "Contributions of C. H. Wedel to the Mennonite Church Through Education."

D. Paul Miller has been working at the University of Nebraska on a sociological study of the Mennonite community at Beatrice, Nebraska.

Grant M. Stoltzfus is continuing his research on the earliest Amish community in America, the one near present Mifflintown, Pa.

Charles B. Hirsch wrote a master's thesis at Indiana University in 1949 on the conscientious objectors in Indiana during World War II. Three revised chapters of the thesis appeared in the *Indiana Magazine of History*, Bloomington, Indiana, beginning in March 1950. The three

chapters are entitled "Conscientious Objectors in Indiana During World War II," "Indiana Churches and Conscientious Objectors During World War II," and "The Civilian Public Service Camp Program in Indiana."

Conscription and Conscience. The American State and the Conscientious Objector, 1940-1947 was recently published by the Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y. The authors are M. Q. Sibley, University of Minnesota, and P. E. Jacob, University of Pennsylvania.

Ira Stoner Franck has recently published two pamphlets under the title *A Jaunt into the Dutch Country*. The first one, 28 pages, carries as its subtitle "Accent on the Amish" and the second one, 35 pages, "Accent on the Mennonites." Mr. Franck uses these in connection with his guided tours of Lancaster County.

We Enter Puerto Rico, a 95-page booklet by Gladys Widmer, was recently published by the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, Elkhart, Indiana.

John D. Unruh's *In the Name of Christ. A History of the Mennonite Central Committee and Its Service 1920-1951* was published recently by the Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pa.

Justus G. Holsinger's *Serving Rural Puerto Rico. A History of Eight Years of Service by the Mennonite Church* has been published by the Mennonite Publishing House, Scottsdale, Pa.

John G. Rempel's *Jubiläum-Album der Konferenz der Mennoniten in Canada, 1902-1952*, 73 pages, was recently published at Rosthern, Sask.

J. Winfield Fretz's report on his study of the Mennonites in Paraguay is now in press at Scottsdale, Pa. It will appear as a full-size book under the title "Pilgrims in Paraguay."

Cornelius Krahn's articles on the history of the Old Colony Mennonites will appear in book form in 1953. Dr. Krahn is now engaged in study and research in Europe but will return to Bethel College in October.

Herbert Wiebe's *Das Siedlungswerk niederländischer Mennoniten im Weichsel-Zwischen Fordon und Weissenberg bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts* was published in 1952 by the J. G. Herder-Institut, Marburg a.d. Lahn.

The 27-page article on "The Mennonite Historical Library at Goshen College" which appeared in the October 1951 *Mennonite Quarterly Review* has been reprinted and is available from the Mennonite Historical Society, Goshen, Indiana. This study revealed that the Historical Library is receiving annually 190 Mennonite periodicals and other serials. The article contains a bibliography of all books in the library published before 1600, a total of 134. The total number of volumes in the Historical Library, not counting bound periodicals, was 6249. At least 800 of these are classed as rare books.

During the past year, the following boxes of materials have been added to the collection housed in the archives reserved

for the Mennonite Church in the Goshen College Library.

Division I—Mennonite General Conference—1 box
Division II—District Conferences—5 boxes
Division III—Local congregations—3 boxes
Division V—Mennonite Board of Education—19 boxes
Division VII—Organizations Below District Conference Level—2 boxes
Division IX—Mennonite Central Committee—35 boxes
Historical Manuscripts Division—61 boxes

Book Reviews

High Bright Buggy Wheels, by Luella Creighton: Dodd, Mead & Company, New York, N.Y., 1951. 342 pp. \$3.00.

High Bright Buggy Wheels is the story of a "Mennonite" girl and her struggle to choose between the Mennonite way of life and the life of the non-Mennonite society around her. It is set in southern Ontario in the days of the early automobile.

A narrative that includes the unspoken thoughts of its characters, as well as their spoken words, is in a sense a psychological study. An individual from one environment cannot easily transfer himself psychologically into an environment that is completely different from his own. To do so at all requires much research and much skill. Mrs. Creighton has chosen this almost impossible task. She has done surprisingly well in interpreting some of the psychology of Christian nonconformity—the reactions of those who have been reared in an atmosphere of Christian separation from the world. The reader who comes from such a background will find the book speaking directly to his own experience at times. On the other hand, however, he finds other parts of the story which do not ring true at all. In the end, he comes to the conclusion that Mrs. Creighton is always the "outsider" looking in and never completely understanding the society which she attempts to describe.

In other respects, Mrs. Creighton indicates a certain lack of acquaintance with the people of whom she writes. The "Mennonites" in her story are certainly not the Mennonites as they are known in Canada today. Not being a Mennonite, however, the author no doubt thinks of Mennonites in general, without singling out any one of the more than a dozen branches. To her, a person may have been a Mennonite, whether he were a member of the Mennonite Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Amish Mennonite Church, or the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church, all of which are to be found in southern Ontario. Oddly enough, she seems to have singled out the last of these four as the "Mennonites" about whom she has written, probably without being aware that they no longer bear the name Mennonite in Canada and most of the United States, but are now

known as the United Missionary Church. Or she may be thinking of the Brethren in Christ Church, which has many similarities to the Mennonite groups. If either of these two is the group of which she writes, camp meetings, free testimony in public services, kneeling in prayer upon entering the meetinghouse, and other practices are no doubt authentic for the period of which she writes. One would question, though, the fact that her "Mennonite" women wear the prayer veiling at home, but wear their bonnets in church. From the absence of references to the doctrine of the prayer veiling in the disciplines of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church of that time, one would infer that they had discontinued the wearing of the prayer veiling by the time of the story. The Brethren in Christ women still wear the prayer veiling and the bonnet, but they would remove their bonnets during the worship service. As nearly as I could ascertain, the family names are more characteristic of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ group.

Regardless of the literary merits or demerits of her book, Luelia Creighton has done the Mennonites the disservice of adding to the confusion of the general public in regard to the different branches of Mennonites. The person not acquainted with distinctions between these groups will say, "These are the Mennonites." The Mennonite reader will say, "These are not Mennonites," and he will resent the confusion which the book increases.

N. P. Springer

Goshen College

The Mennonite Church in the Second World War, by Guy F. Hershberger. Mennonite Publishing House, 1951. 308 pp. \$3.50.

In his facile style Dr. Hershberger has again demonstrated his ability to take a segment of church history and make it relive before the reader in portrait fashion. The clarity of style and the careful treatment of all kinds of data makes this another volume equal in value, for the period covered, to its worthy predecessor, *War, Peace, and Nonresistance*.

The introductory chapter entitled "The Peace Problems Committee," supplies an excellent background for an understanding of the succeeding chapters. The vision, wisdom, and tact employed by the leadership of the church during this critical period in working out a practical peace program is commendable, far beyond what was accomplished during World War I.

As one reads through chapters two to seven inclusive he is impressed with the author's understanding of the total nonresistant and peace program as it worked in actual operation. The chapters contain much basic materials of permanent value.

During chapter eight the author takes time out to point up what he considers

a weakness in the CPS program. The title of this chapter is "Spiritual Ministry to the CPS Men." While conscientious efforts were made to supply the spiritual needs to men in CPS camps, there was still much lacking from the standpoint of regularity of spiritual ministrations.

If the reader desires to know the attitude of conference and church leaders toward those of our brethren who took up military service he will find excellent statements in chapter nine.

In the next two chapters there is a factual yet vivid description of the extent to which nonresistance was tested. No one who took the nonresistant position escaped being put under test in some form or other, whether by responsible or irresponsible citizenry. These tests came under different labels, but they were tests nevertheless. This chapter like most others is a real eye-opener.

Too briefly stated, chapters twelve to fourteen is an excellent description of how our vision of peace and service was enlarged; of the adjustments made and our contribution to the cause of peace expanded. All these changes and activities resulted in the deepening of convictions and consecrations to services of various kinds during postwar days. This part of the story is ably portrayed in the two chapters dealing with "Ministry to War Sufferers" and "Mennonite Service Units."

The statements on "Peace Literature" and "Peace Teaching" produced during this period of stress and strain are again a substantiation of the old adage, "Necessity is the mother of invention." As is shown vividly in chapters seventeen and eighteen "Peace Literature" and "Peace Teaching" was produced in almost mushroom fashion.

Chapter nineteen contains much wisdom. The author stresses the need of church loyalty, but beyond this loyalty there is much value derived from cooperating with other peace groups who cannot always see eye to eye in detail. Dangers of such procedure are carefully pointed up, yet as the author points out on page 269, "It is the writer's belief, however, that CPS experience of the men in camp, and the church as a whole, gained rather than lost in their understanding of nonresistance, and in the commitment to the same." It would seem that with this cautious evaluation careful thinkers would concur.

The last chapter of the book is also true to its title, "Summary and Evaluation." It is an excellent review and contains many constructive suggestions for the future peace program of the Mennonite Church.

The table of contents and a good index makes this a ready reference book for future writers and speakers. Limitation of space prevented the insertion, here, of even a few of the many helpful quotations and meaningful figures and other data. Our thanks are due to the sponsoring

Peace Problems Committee and to Dr. Hershberger for assembling in one volume so much valuable information of this period of Mennonite history. Not only Mennonites, but all peace loving nonresistant Christians, will find time and money profitably spent to read *The Mennonite Church in the Second World War*.

Walter E. Oswald

Hesston College.

Wings of Decision, by Eunice Shellenberger. Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa., 1951. 240 pp. \$2.75.

Wings of Decision is a piece of fiction written to help young people in making decisions for God, particularly in attitudes toward military service. The author presents convincing arguments for the nonresistant position. She shows the difficulties faced by a young man who takes a stand as a conscientious objector in a community swept by war hysteria. Also she pictures the disastrous results which may follow an effort to compromise one's convictions. In a more positive vein she stresses the fact that a life of service dedicated to God and humanity is the only logical course for the Christian young person who has seen something of the need of a war-torn world.

Mrs. Shellenberger has succeeded in presenting material which accomplishes her purpose, "to strengthen the convictions of your young people with the knowledge that the Christ way is the only way to true happiness and success."

The leading character, David Sheppard, and his friend Jerry are convincing persons. From the very beginning they reveal themselves as real boys, whether it is in their wistful daydreams of becoming pilots or in their contacts with the other boys and girls in school activities. Later, as they face the draft issue, Jerry's compromising attitude and his final abandonment of his convictions are credible because from the first we have been prepared to expect some instability. Likewise, David's courage and decisiveness are plausible because of his careful home training and his own purposeful attitude toward life. However, Jerry remains a likable young fellow though weak, and David's struggles with fears and discouragement keep him from being too good to be a real person.

David's further experiences are similar to those of many young men in CPS days. The author depicts with understanding the emotions of an energetic young man in work which often seems inconsequential. David's growth in spiritual life and the development of his deeper convictions for service are presented naturally as the outgrowth of his experiences. The development of this part of the story is altogether plausible with no effort to capitalize on dramatic or spectacular events.

In the love element the story becomes less realistic. The two girls are the conventional figures of Christian fiction—the loyal and noble heroine who deserves to be loved and the pretty, flighty rival who

attracts the hero by her charm and then disappoints him. The final surprise meeting of David and Peggy in a relief center in Europe is hardly credible. One cannot believe that two persons could have been assigned to the same project without either being aware of the other's appointment.

Another weakness of the story is in the portrayal of adults. David's parents and his Sunday-school teacher usually talk in stilted artificial language, especially when they are giving advice or explaining Christian ideals. It seems that in her effort to indoctrinate thoroughly, the author has sometimes sacrificed naturalness.

In spite of these faults the book as a whole is well written. The author's style is clear and direct. She has succeeded in making the leading character and most of the events of his life seem real. Skillful use is made of the unifying theme of the wingless planes which Dave and Jerry tattooed on their arms as a symbol of their ambition and of the spiritual interpretation which David attached to the symbol. Above all, the book is significant as a challenge to young Christians. It should be recommended to Mennonite young people and it can be read with profit by adults who are concerned with the problems of youth.

Eastern Mennonite College

A. Grace Wenger

In the Name of Christ: A History of the Mennonite Central Committee and Its Service 1920-1951, by John D. Unruh. Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa., 1952. 404 pp. \$3.75.

In the Name of Christ is the story of the interesting beginning and remarkable growth and work of the Mennonite Central Committee. This agency came into being in 1920, a result of concern for the suffering of Mennonite people in Russia, and since that time it has grown to be the major service channel for the 175,000 Mennonites of Canada and the United States. The author attempts to give an accurate account of the work of this organization.

The opening section of the book presents a brief sketch of the 425-year history of the Mennonite Church. Concern for suffering and the desire to alleviate that suffering was the logical expression of the Mennonite heritage. Since the various groups wished their efforts to reflect the name and spirit of Christ, the MCC was conceived as the most desirable way through which they could give expression to this Christian conviction. The author briefly reviews the early relief efforts in Russia and the subsequent role of the MCC in finding new homes for the refugees. World War II brought new assignments, including peace education and contact work with the government and the Civilian Public Service program which are given brief treatment. The tremendous expansion of the relief effort as the cries of war-suffering people reached and moved the hearts of the brotherhood is a most revealing story. God did not let

our people rest until there was an outpouring of money, supplies, and workers, hitherto unseen in our church. The tragic story of our refugee brethren and of the ministry of the MCC in this area receives careful treatment. The outreach into voluntary service and mental health services is also recorded. The values which came to our own brotherhood through these efforts receive compelling attention in the concluding section of the book. Some of these values might be listed as renewed sensitivity to spiritual and physical need, greater appreciation and understanding among the various Mennonite groups, a consciousness of world affairs and world Mennonitism, an opening of new doors for mission work, and an awareness of the continuing task before us.

This report to the Mennonite churches on the work of the agency which they have created should receive wide circulation. The information in this history will be of inestimable value through the coming years as further attempts are made to evaluate and interpret the spirit and work of the MCC. There are excellent summary charts on the amount of relief supplies, budgets, and expenditures. The list of MCC personnel given at the various places increases the value of the book.

There will be some readers who will feel that certain aspects of the work have been overemphasized and others not given sufficient treatment. Some may differ with certain of the author's conclusions such as the statement that "health service in Puerto Rico proved to be one of the most satisfying experiences in all relief work. . ." There may be a few who will feel that the book is too factual and not sufficiently interpretive and evaluative. Nevertheless, it is the most comprehensive and accurate account of the work of this important servant of the church yet available. In a day in which many of us know far too little about the extensive work of our MCC during its short history, Brother Unruh's book will make a most significant contribution. If we are to continue to make the MCC an effective channel of witness and service, all of us need to know its past development that we may better support it in the role which it will continue to play in our church life of today.

Goshen College

Atlee Beechy

Serving Rural Puerto Rico, by Justus G. Holsinger. Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa., 1952. 226 pp. \$2.75.

Serving Rural Puerto Rico is the story of the birth and growth of a Mennonite service and mission project. The author is well qualified to write because he saw many significant changes in the progress of the work there. He was one of the first Mennonite workers on the island in 1944. He experienced the struggles and pleasures in the founding of the work there for three years. After teaching for two years in the States, he returned for a period of three and one-half additional years. During the last term, he saw the

transfer of the service project of La Plata from the Mennonite Central Committee to the Mennonite Relief Committee and a definite work of evangelization begun there.

Puerto Rico is a beautiful island located in a chain of islands in the Caribbean Sea. It is an island thirty miles wide and one hundred miles long, a beautiful creation in scenic beauty, but it is also a very needy overpopulated area, with resultant poverty which brings malnutrition and, in some instances, sluggishness. As you read the book you are not allowed to forget the good and worth-while qualities of our Puerto Rican neighbor. He is a sincere, hospitable person and often has much ambition. In reality, he is poor because he was born poor. Although he has done much for himself despite his poverty, still his needs are great.

One need of the Puerto Rican is the physical need, as noted above. The first Civilian Public Service men were sent there by the government of the United States to help alleviate this problem. The islanders were given aid in agricultural, medical, and community services. This aid was appreciated very much by the people.

The CPS men were located on the island just a short time when they realized that the fundamental need was a spiritual one. Most of the Puerto Rican people are church members, the greater percentage of them being baptized in the Catholic Church. By the daily living of the members of the service project, people began to notice that these people were different, living according to the teachings of Jesus. At first the workers were under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. Though they were not forbidden to engage in formal religious instruction, they realized that any disagreement coming from such a program might cause Selective Service to withdraw service units from the island and therefore the doors would be closed to a definite mission program following the war. Also in the beginning the language problem was a hindrance in the teaching of the religious program.

The mission program was launched in Pulguillas in December 1945, when the Paul Lauvers arrived. In La Plata it definitely started with the arrival of the Lester Hershey family in April 1947. Later mission stations were begun in Rabanal, Palo Hincado, Cuchilla, Penon, and Coamo Arriba. There are now over two hundred members in the Mennonite Church of Puerto Rico and many more are hearing the Gospel of salvation.

This book is a very accurate account and brings enjoyable reminiscences to those of us who have served there. For others it is an excellent basis for a private or group study of one of our newer mission fields. It would be invaluable as a background for those who are interested in a term of service in Puerto Rico. For all of us, the book helps us to pray more effectively for the work and the workers in this tiny island.

Akron, Pa. Paul A. Leatherman

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